

Times and by John Walter, the chief proprietor of *The Times*, from his place in the House of Commons.

It is not to elicit an electioneering cheer [said Disraeli], it is not to gain a single vote that I tell you I have long since registered myself among the sternest opponents of that measure. I can appeal to a career which, though private, is not altogether obscure, in proof of my sincerity and consistency. I have the proud consolation to know that, with the exception of the honorable member for Berkshire [John Walter], I was the first county magistrate who raised his voice against that odious Bill. I had the honor of calling the first meeting in my own county against it, and it was this right hand inscribed one of the first petitions to both Houses of Parliament. I hope, therefore, my sincerity cannot for a moment be doubted. That Bill bears fearful tidings for the poor. Its primary object is founded not only on a political blunder, but a moral error — it went on the principle that relief to the poor is a *charity*. I maintain that it is a *right*! . . . I would not have the poor man deprived of the small consolation of witnessing the games of his grandchildren — I would not deny him the mournful satisfaction of viewing the tombs of his forefathers. One of our poets has beautifully said—' Sweet is the music of the Sabbath bells/ but of this music the Whigs have deprived the poor and the aged. For him the Sabbath bells sound no more. Immured in a prison, no spiritual consolation can he derive in the hallowed temple of his ancestors j but, at length, broken-hearted, he quits a world with which he is disgusted. To sum up my feelings in a sentence — I consider that this Act has disgraced the country more than any other upon record. Both a moral crime and a political blunder, it announces to the world that in England poverty is a crime.

' I was glad,' he remarks to Pyne in praying him to guard against the descent of writs daring the election, 'to find the Sheriff's officer here among my staunch supporters: I suppose gratitude.' He was sanguine from the first, and when the Liberal candidate, Wyndham Lewis's colleague in the late Parliament, retired from the contest it looked for a moment as if he would **be** returned unopposed.